

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on August 31, 2007. Claims 1-23 and 25-27 were pending in that action. All claims were rejected. With the present response, claims 1-3 and 6-12 are amended. The remaining claims are unchanged. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims as amended are respectfully solicited in light of the following comments.

Beginning on page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 12-23 and 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In response, Applicant has amended claim 12 to eliminate the ambiguity created by the noted use of the term “identify.” Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under §112 is respectfully solicited. Beginning on page 3 of the Office Action, claims 1-6, 11-14, 20-23 and 25-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0191731 (hereinafter referred to as “the Stewart reference”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,275,787 (hereinafter referred to as “the Baisley reference”). Beginning on page 11 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 12 as being unpatentable over the Stewart and Baisley references in further combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,389,414 (hereinafter referred to as “the Delo reference”).

Beginning on page 14 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 7-10 and 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Stewart and Baisley references and in further combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,859,919 (hereinafter referred to as “the Deffler reference”). For reasons that will be outlined in detail below, it is respectfully submitted that the currently pending claims, at least as amended, are patentably distinguishable over the cited references of record.

The Examiner is respectfully invited to look at Applicant’s specification at paragraph 0068. At this point, Applicant describes a framework for treating a property of an object or entity as an object (referred to as a PropertyObject) in order to provide support for validation and enforcement of constraints relative to the property of the object. FIG. 4 of Applicant’s specification illustrates elements of a PropertyObject. Again, this PropertyObject is essentially an object representation of a property. Notably, the PropertyObject has a reference to a

PropertyValidator, which is a class used to determine if the property associated with the PropertyObject is valid. It is respectfully submitted that this PropertyValidator is unique relative to the cited art. The PropertyValidator is notably separate from its associated PropertyObject, and also separate from the associated property, and also separate from the associated object. Treating property validators separately provides many benefits. For example, it is easy for a developer to offer a new property validator and associate it with instances of property objects. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner keeps these things in mind while reviewing the amendments herein made to the pending independent claims.

With the present response, independent claim 1 has been amended to clarify that a second object instantiated as a property of a first object (i.e., the second object being a PropertyObject) includes a reference to a property validator object. As claimed, the property validator object is stored separately from the first and second objects. Further, independent claim 1 has also been amended to clarify that a function referenced within the property validator object is applied so as to ascertain if the property of the first object is validated. Dependent claims 2, 3, and 6-11 have been amended to accommodate these changes to the terminology utilized in the affiliated independent claim.

As the Examiner points out on page 4 of the Office Action, the cited Stewart reference fails to teach or suggest a second object that includes a reference to a collection of constraint information stored separately relative to the second object. It stands to reason that the Stewart reference also fails to teach or suggest a validator object stored separately from the first and second objects as claimed. It is respectfully submitted that the cited Baisley reference also fails to teach or suggest such features. While the Baisley reference does teach (at col. 4, lines 7-10) that a database system can enforce constraints in the form of restrictions on properties of objects, there is absolutely no teaching or suggestion of such constraints being implemented through the vehicle of a completely separate property validator object as claimed. It is further submitted that the cited Delo and Deffler references do not provide a remedy for the claim elements missing from the cited references. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-11 are in condition for allowance at least for these reasons.

With the present response, independent claim 12 has been amended to clarify that constraint information identified from within an object form based on a property of an entity is constraint information that is referenced from within a property validator object that is separate from both the object and the entity to be validated. Accordingly, similar to claim 1, claim 12 provides a property validator object as a vehicle for enforcing constraints upon a property of an entity. For reasons similar to those discussed in relation to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that none of the cited references teach or suggest such a property validator object. For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 12 and dependent claims 13-27 are in condition for allowance.

The amendments made to independent claims 1 and 12 with the present response eliminate the broad terminology "a collection of constraint information" and replace it with a more specific reference to "a property validator object." It is respectfully submitted that none of the cited references teach or suggest a property validator object that is a separate entity as claimed. Applicant hopes that these amendments will lead to a Notice of Allowance and bring to an end what has been a long and drawn out prosecution process in the present case. Favorable action is respectfully solicited. The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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